

DOUGLAS W. JUDSON

COUNCILLOR, TOWN OF FORT FRANCES

June 29, 2021

Town of Fort Frances
320 Portage Avenue
Fort Frances, ON P9A 3P9

To Mayor and Council:

Re: Resignation from Committee

This letter shall serve as notice of my resignation, effective immediately, from the Town of Fort Frances' Indigenous Relations Committee.

As you know, the primary work of this Committee has not moved forward in over half a year, despite incurring significant professional fees over that time. In my view, the reasons for this delay are plainly attributable to the mayor and obstruction by various persons involved with the municipality.

At times, this has occurred with disregard for Council's direction, the mandate given to the Committee, or instructions that have been provided around basic matters such as communications to other parties. Of immediate concern, the mayor and the municipality's lawyers have been engaged in communications and meetings without notice or participation from the Committee. Instructions were given without Committee input, Council authorization, or the involvement of staff. These actions were undemocratic, and contrary to the will of Council.

It is obvious that repeated steps have been taken to exclude me from this file, restrict the flow of information, and undermine my input – all in direct contravention of Council's delegation of this important work and my rights as a member of Council. What makes this more shocking is that I am the only member of Council with legal background or education who has worked directly with First Nation communities. Input, direction, and questions I have raised have been outright ignored, and when challenged, those responsible have engaged in obfuscation and gaslighting.

These events have given rise to significant ethical and process concerns. They have not created the necessary environment of trust or transparency for my continued involvement on the Committee. The malicious insinuation and gossip throughout this term, by some individuals involved with the municipality, that my productive working relationships with unrelated Indigenous clients and organizations creates a conflict is, frankly, racist.

I no longer have confidence in the mayor's leadership of this Committee. I am also unwilling to waste my time if my contributions to this mandate and the Committee's role are going to be ignored and disrespected or proper processes are not going to be followed.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Douglas W. Judson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Douglas W. Judson